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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/745,978	12/22/2000	Mohanasundaram Chinnappan	020431.0753	8477

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EXAMINER

LUGO, CARLOS

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3677

DATE MAILED: 11/18/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/745,978

Applicant(s)

CHINNAPPAN ET AL.

Examiner

Carlos Lugo

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 September 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 Dec 2000 and 8 Sept 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 8.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is in response to applicant's amendment filed on September 8, 2003.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) The invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. **Claims 1-7,9-16,18-25,27 and 28 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ebay.com (Ebay).

Regarding claims 1,11 and 20, Ebay discloses a global content directory comprising a directory structure (Categories Section) comprising a plurality of product classes organized in a hierarchy (Antiques, books, Movies, etc).

Each product class categorizes a plurality of products and defines one or more attributes of the products categorized in the product class (for example, if an user choose the Sports category, sub categories will come out, for example baseball, golf, etc.). Each product class is associated to a pointer identifying a seller database (seller).

A search interface (Smart Search or Find It! blank) is operable to communicate a search query for product data to one or more seller databases identified by the one ore more pointers associated with the selected product class.

For example, if a buyer wants something related to "Roberto Clemente", the buyer goes to categories and chooses the Sports category. Then, the buyer can simply Type Down "Roberto Clemente" in the Smart Search or Find It! Blank to look for it in that category.

Then the buyer will be provided with a list of sellers selling things related to "Roberto Clemente" (See Pages 4-6).

As to claims 2,12 and 21, Ebay discloses the use of an access protocol (A protocol is a set of conventions governing the treatment and especially the formatting of data in an electronic communications system, therefore, in order to operate the search format, the website, in this case Ebay, must have an access protocol to operate).

As to claims 3,13 and 22, Ebay discloses that the directory structure is distributed between pluralities of computers (when different buyers and seller enter through the Internet).

As to claims 4,14 and 23, Ebay discloses the use of the Internet.

As to claim 5, Ebay illustrates that the global content directory further includes one or more additional directory structure (Pages 7 and 8; Browse Button, when a person press this button, the following alternatives appears: categories, regions, themes or stores).

As to claims 6,15 and 24, Ebay disclose the use of a structured query language. A query language provides a means of retrieving records or parts of records and performing various calculations before displaying the results. Therefore, when a

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person is searching for something in particular using Ebay, query language will retrieve records or parts of records and performing various calculations before displaying the results.

As to claims 7,16 and 25, Ebay discloses that the search query includes one or more attributes of the class selected by the user.

For example, if a buyer wants something related to "Roberto Clemente", the buyer goes to categories and chooses the Sports category. Then, the buyer can simply Type Down "Roberto Clemente" in the Smart Search or Find It! Blank to look for it in that category.

As to claims 9,18 and 27, Ebay discloses that the search interface is operable to receive search results from one or more seller databases in response to the search query.

For example, if a buyer wants something related to "Roberto Clemente", the buyer can simply Type Down "Roberto Clemente" in the Smart Search or Find It! Blank and the buyer will get different products related to the search term (example Roberto Clemente) from different sellers.

As to claims 10,14 and 28, Ebay discloses that the directory receives a selection from the user of a product data from the search and in response the user will get information of the seller and the product (See the description of the product).

4. **Claims 1-7,9-16,18-25,27 and 28 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Amazon.com (Amazon).

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Regarding claims 1,11 and 20, Amazon discloses a global content directory comprising a directory structure (Page 1 at the top and at the left side) comprising a plurality of product classes organized in a hierarchy (Books, Movies, etc).

Each product class categorizes a plurality of products and defines one or more attributes of the products categorized in the product class (Page 3, for example, if an user choose the Electronics category, sub categories will come out, for example Audio & Video, Computers, etc.). Each product class is associated to a pointer identifying a seller database (seller).

A search interface (Page 3, either search within the website (Amazon) or a web search Web) is operable to communicate a search query for product data to one or more seller databases identified by the one ore more pointers associated with the selected product class.

For example, if a buyer wants something related to "DVD Players", the buyer goes to categories and chooses the Electronics category. Then, the buyer can simply Type Down "DVD" in the Search Blank to look for it in that category or all the products.

Then the buyer will be provided with a list of sellers selling things related to "DVD" (See Pages 4-6).

As to claims 2,12 and 21, Amazon discloses the use of an access protocol (A protocol is a set of conventions governing the treatment and especially the formatting of data in an electronic communications system, therefore, in order to

operate the search format, the website, in this case Amazon, must have an access protocol to operate).

As to claims 3,13 and 22, Amazon discloses that the directory structure is distributed between pluralities of computers (when different buyers and seller enter through the Internet).

As to claims 4,14 and 23, Amazon discloses the use of the Internet.

As to claim 5, Amazon illustrates that the global content directory further includes one or more additional directory structure (Page 3, at the top or at the left side).

As to claims 6,15 and 24, Amazon discloses the use of a structured query language. A query language provides a means of retrieving records or parts of records and performing various calculations before displaying the results. Therefore, when a person is searching for something in particular using Amazon, query language will retrieve records or parts of records and performing various calculations before displaying the results.

As to claims 7,16 and 25, Amazon discloses that the search query includes one or more attributes of the class selected by the user.

For example, if a buyer wants something related to "DVD", the buyer goes to categories and chooses the Electronics category. Then, the buyer can simply Type Down "DVD" in the Search Blank to look for it in that category.

As to claims 9,18 and 27, Amazon discloses that the search interface is operable to receive search results from one or more seller databases in response to the search query.

For example, if a buyer wants something related to "DVD", the buyer can simply Type Down "DVD" in the Search Blank and the buyer will get different products related to the search term (example DVD) from different sellers.

As to claims 10,14 and 28, DVD discloses that the directory receives a selection from the user of a product data from the search and in response the user will get information of the seller and the product (Pages 5 and 6).

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) The invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

6. **Claims 1-28 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US Pat No 6,366,910 to Rajaraman et al (Rajaraman).

Regarding claims 1,11 and 20, Rajaraman discloses a global content directory (GPS) comprising a directory structure (202) comprising a plurality of product classes organized in a hierarchy (Col. 2 Lines 57-61).

Each product class categorizes a plurality of products and defines one or more attributes of the products categorized in the product class (Col. 2 Lines 61-65, for example, if an user is looking for clothes, sub categories will come out, for example shoes, shirts, etc.). Each product class is associated to a pointer identifying a seller database (seller).

A search interface (207) is operable to communicate a search query for product data to one or more seller databases that is identified by the one or more pointers associated with the selected product class.

As to claims 2,12 and 21, Rajaraman discloses the use of an access protocol (A protocol is a set of conventions governing the treatment and especially the formatting of data in an electronic communications system, therefore, in order to operate the search format, the website, must have an access protocol to operate).

As to claims 3,13 and 22, Rajaraman discloses that the directory structure is distributed between pluralities of computers (when different buyers and seller enter through the Internet).

As to claims 4,14 and 23, Rajaraman discloses the use of the Internet.

As to claim 5, Rajaraman illustrates that the global content directory further includes one or more additional directory structure (Figures 1a and 1b).

As to claims 6,15 and 24, Rajaraman disclose the use of a structured query language. A query language provides a means of retrieving records or parts of records and performing various calculations before displaying the results. Therefore, when a person is searching for something in particular, query language will retrieve

records or parts of records and performing various calculations before displaying the results.

As to claims 7,16 and 25, Rajaraman discloses that the search query includes one or more attributes of the class selected by the user.

As to claims 8,17 and 26, Rajaraman illustrates that the search query includes values for one or more desired products features specified by the user (Figure 4).

As to claims 9,18 and 27, Rajaraman discloses that the search interface is operable to receive search results from one or more seller databases in response to the search query (the buyer will get different products related to the search term (for example: clothes) from different sellers).

As to claims 10,14 and 28, Rajaraman discloses that the directory receives a selection from the user of a product data from the search and in response the user will get information of the seller and the product.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments filed September 8, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding applicant's arguments that Ebay fails to disclose "one or more pointers associated with each product class, each pointer identifying a seller database in which product data enabling a product transaction is stored for products associated with the product class" (Page 14 Line 6), Ebay discloses this limitation.

A pointer, in computer terms, is a computer memory address that contains another address (as of desire data). It is known that any Internet web site operates

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with pointers. When a person uses Ebay, and for example selects the "Sports Category", this address contains the addresses of the different sports and the different sports addresses contains more addresses or pointers.

As to applicant's arguments that Ebay fails to disclose "a search interface operable to communicate, in response to a selection of a product class by a user of the global content directory, a search query for product data to one or more seller databases identified by the one or more pointers associated with the selected product class" (Page 15 Line 1), Ebay discloses this limitation.

When a user tries to find a product in Ebay, it can go to a category and then can make a search for the product in that specific category. Then the buyer will be provided with a list of sellers selling things related to the product.

As to applicant's arguments that Amazon fails to disclose "one or more pointers associated with each product class, each pointer identifying a seller database in which product data enabling a product transaction is stored for products associated with the product class" (Page 16 Line 17), Amazon discloses this limitation (see arguments to Ebay).

As to applicant's arguments that Amazon fails to disclose a search query (Page 17 Line 16), Amazon discloses this limitation (see arguments to Ebay).


As to applicant's arguments that Rajaraman fails to disclose "one or more pointers" (Page 18 Line 24), Rajaraman discloses this limitation (see rejection above and Figure 4).

Conclusion

8. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a). A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.
9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Carlos Lugo whose telephone number is 703-305-9747. The examiner can normally be reached on 9-6pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Judy Swann can be reached on 703-306-4115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-306-5771.


J. J. SWANN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

Carlos Lugo

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Examiner
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November 10, 2003.